

over 19,000 sorties, thousands and thousands of bombs have been dropped, and there have been very few incidents of this kind. I know that you know how many there have been because Mr. Milosevic makes sure that the media has access to them.

I grieve for the loss of the innocent Chinese and their families. I grieve for the loss of the innocent Serbian civilians and their families. I grieve for the loss of the innocent Kosovars who were put into a military vehicle that our people thought was a military vehicle, and they've often been used as shields.

But I ask you to remember the stories I told you earlier. There are thousands of people that have been killed systematically by the Serb forces. There are 100,000 people who are still missing. We must remember who the real victims are here and why this started.

It is no accident that Mr. Milosevic has not allowed the international media to see the slaughter and destruction in Kosovo. There is no picture reflecting the story that one refugee told of 15 men being tied together and set on fire while they were alive. No, there are no pictures of that. But we have enough of those stories to know that there is a systematic effort that has animated our actions, and we must not forget it.

Now, Serbia faces a choice. Mr. Milosevic and his allies have dragged their people down a path of racial and religious hatred. This has resulted, again and again, in bloodshed, in loss of life, in loss of territory, and denial of the Serbs' own freedom—and now, in an unwinnable conflict against the united international community.

But there is another path available—one where people of different backgrounds and religions work together, within and across national borders; where people stop redrawing borders and start drawing blueprints for a prosperous, multiethnic future.

This is the path the other nations of Southeastern Europe have adopted. Day after day, they work to improve lives, to build a future in which the forces that pull people together are stronger than those that tear them apart. Albania and Bulgaria, as well as our NATO ally, Greece, have overcome historical differences to recognize the independence of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Romania, Bulgaria, Macedonia and others have deepened freedoms, promoted tolerance, pursued difficult economic reforms. Slovenia has advanced democracy at home, and prosperity; stood for regional integration, increased security cooperation, with a center to defuse land mines left from the conflict in Bosnia.

These nations are reaffirming that discord is not inevitable, that there is not some Balkan disease that has been there for centuries, always waiting to break out. They are drawing on a rich past where peoples of the region did, in fact, live together in peace.

Now, we and our allies have been helping to build that future, but we have to accelerate our efforts. We will work with the European Union, the World Bank, the IMF and others to ease the immediate economic strains, to relieve debt burden, to speed reconstruction, to advance economic reforms and regional trade. We will promote political freedom and tolerance of minorities.

At our NATO Summit last month we agreed to deepen our security engagement in the region, to adopt an ambitious program to help aspiring nations improve their candidacies to join the NATO Alliance. They have risked and sacrificed the support of the military and humanitarian efforts. They deserve our support.

Last Saturday was the anniversary of one of the greatest day in American history and in the history of freedom—VE Day. Though America celebrated that day in 1945, we did

not pack up and go home. We stayed—to provide economic aid, to help to bolster democracy, to keep the peace—and because our strength and resolve was important as Europe rebuilt, learned to live together; faced new challenges together.

The resources we devoted to the Marshall Plan, to NATO, to other efforts, I think we would all agree have been an enormous bargain for our long-term prosperity and security here in the United States—just as the resources we are devoting here at this institution—to reaching out to people from other nations, to their officers, to their military, in a spirit of cooperation are an enormous bargain for the future security of the people of the United States.

Now, that's what I want to say in my last point here. War is expensive; peace is cheaper. Prosperity is downright profitable. We have to invest in the rebuilding of this region. Southeastern Europe, after the Cold War, was free but poor. As long as they are poor, they will offer a less compelling counterweight to the kind of ethnic exclusivity and oppression that Mr. Milosevic preaches.

If you believe the Marshall Plan worked, and you believe war is to be avoided whenever possible, and you understand how expensive it is and how profitable prosperity is, how much we have gotten out of what we have done—then we have to work with our European allies to rebuild Southeastern Europe, and to give them an economic future that will pull them together.

The European Union is prepared to take the lead role in Southeastern Europe's development. Russia, Ukraine, other nations of Europe's East are building democracy—they want to be a part of this.

We are trying to do this in other places in the world. What a great ally Japan has been for peace and prosperity, and will be again as they work to overcome their economic difficulty. Despite our present problems, I still believe we must remain committed to building a long-term strategic partnership with China.

We must work together with people where we can, as we prepare—always—to protect and defend our security if we must. But a better world and a better Europe are clearly in America's interests.

Serbia and the rest of the Balkans should be part of it. So I want to say this one more time: Our quarrel is not with the Serbian people. The United States has been deeply enriched by Serbian Americans. Millions of Americans are now cheering for some Serbian Americans as we watch the basketball play-offs every night on television. People of Serbian heritage are an important part of our society. We can never forget that the Serbs fought bravely with the allies against fascist aggression in World War II; that they suffer much; that Serbs, too, have been uprooted from their homes and have suffered greatly in the conflicts of the past decade that Mr. Milosevic provoked.

But the cycle of violence has to end. The children of the Balkans—all of them—deserve the chance to grow up without fear. Serbs simply must free themselves of the notion that their neighbors must be their enemies. The real enemy is a poisonous hatred unleashed by a cynical leader, based on a distorted view of what constitutes real national greatness.

The United States has become greater as we have shed racism, as we have shed a sense of superiority, as we have become more committed to working together across the lines that divide us, as we have found other ways to define meaning and purpose in life. And so has every other country that has embarked on that course.

We stand ready, therefore, to embrace Serbia as a part of a new Europe—if the people

of Serbia are willing to invest and embrace that kind of future; if they are ready to build a Serbia, and a Yugoslavia, that is democratic, and respects the right and dignity of all people; if they are ready to join a world where people reach across the divide to find their common humanity and their prosperity.

This is the right vision, and the right course. It is not only the morally right thing for America, it is the right thing for our security interests over the long run. It is the vision for which the veterans in this room struggled so valiantly, for which so many others have given their lives.

With your example to guide us, and with our allies beside us, it is a vision that will prevail. And it is very, very much worth standing for.

Thank you, and God bless you. (Applause.)

OPPOSE RENEWAL OF WHALING BY MAKAH TRIBE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Washington (Mr. METCALF) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. METCALF. Mr. Speaker, I rise to speak on an issue that millions of our people in our Nation seriously care about. Since the close of the worldwide whaling era at the end of the last century, it has been U.S. policy to oppose killing whales.

But today we have a real problem. The Clinton-Gore administration is quietly changing this policy by authorizing the hunting and killing of whales by the Makah Indian tribe in northwest Washington State.

The victims of course are the gray whales, the major focus of whale watching on the northwest coast of Washington State and the United States. These whales are local to the northwest coast, and they do not fear boats. They are used to the boats. They see boats all the time, and they have no fear.

Whales do have a commercial value and there are interests just waiting to cash in, even as they did in the glory days of worldwide commercial whaling. If we allow whaling to begin in America again, what can we say to Japan and Norway whose whaling we have opposed for years? We tried to get them to stop. Now we are going to allow commercial whaling again.

The real problem is, once we open the door to new worldwide commercial whaling, how do we ever close it again? Most Americans believe that we have risen above the wanton slaughter of the buffalo for their hides or the whales for the value of their body parts.

□ 1615

I urge my colleagues to join me in opposition to the renewal of whaling by the Makah Tribe of Northwest Washington State.

SAVE OUR CHILDREN FROM GUN VIOLENCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SAXTON). Under a previous order of the

House, the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. MCCARTHY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York. Mr. Speaker, yesterday the Senate voted down a loophole that could have been closed as far as guns being sold at gun shows. This was a very moderate request so that people, people with felonies, criminals, could not go to gun shows and buy guns that could possibly be used or sold to our young people.

Last month when we had the shooting in Littleton, Colorado, it was something that all of us as victims were dreading. We always knew it was not a matter of if there would be another shooting in our schools, it all came down to a matter of when. How did I know that? I knew that because we have had five committee hearings here in the House. We have brought in all the experts. We were trying to analyze from the five shootings in our schools what could be done, what can we do.

After Littleton, the American people said, we have to do something, and yet we hear silence here in the halls of Congress and now, obviously, in the Senate. What people forget is that every single day in this country 13 of our young people die through homicide, accidental deaths and suicides. People forget about those young people on a daily basis. Here they say there is nothing we can do.

I do not believe that. I believe with sensible, moderate changes on how our young people get guns we can make a big difference. I know we will not be able to save all our children, but we certainly should do everything that we can to save as many as we can.

I also know if the American people, the mothers, the fathers, students, teachers, if they do not become involved in this debate, we will not do anything here in the House. There are many of us that want to fight to save our children, to make sure our children feel safe when they go to the schools, but we need help. We need help because we have to hear from the American people. We need grass-root organizations. We need people to call here in Congress, call their Senator, e-mail them and say, "We want something done."

When there is such a high percentage of Americans willing to make the sacrifice of being inconvenienced, inconvenienced to hopefully have more safety for our children, they are willing to do it. And yet those in the Senate and here in the House we hear nothing from. It is wrong.

All we want is to try and have safe schools, to save our children. That is something that we are supposed to be doing here. That is why I came to Congress, to reduce gun violence, not to take away the right of someone to own a gun. I have never intended that.

All I am saying is, if someone owns a gun, they are responsible for it and they have to make sure that our young people do not get into it.

I know everyone is talking about the media, videos, mental health. These

are all important issues. But responsibility with the parents, that is important also. We can deal with all these things. We have all the information. Anyone can go to the Committee on Education and the Workforce, and we will give them all the information they need.

There was one thing in common in every single one of the school shootings, the easy access of guns to our young people. I do not know what it will take to have the Members here and the Senate wake up. I do not know what it will take. I dread what it might take.

We can make a difference. The American people have said enough is enough. We should listen to them.

Why won't this Congress listen to the American people and allow us to pass common sense laws to keep guns out of the hands of our children?

Instead of listening to the American people, the Senate listened to the NRA leadership. Instead of making the laws stronger to stop kids and criminals from buying guns, the Senate has made the laws weaker. As a mother, grandmother and Member of Congress, I am deeply saddened by the Senate's vote.

The American people don't want this to be about politics but that's exactly what it is. How many more children will have to die before Congress wakes up and passes laws to save young lives?

We will not give up. We will fight harder for what the American people want—common sense measures to keep guns away from our kids and off our school campuses. My office alone has heard from thousands of people throughout this country who support legislation to address the deadly combination of children and guns.

Now more than ever, we need to hear from every school and from every parent in this nation. Call, write, e-mail—flood the halls of Congress with your demands—let this Congress know that you want meaningful legislation passed to save our children from gun violence. Every day that goes by with more silence from this Congress, we lose 13 more kids.

CONSUMERS NEED PATIENT PROTECTION LEGISLATION TO PROTECT THEM FROM HMO ABUSES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 1999, the gentleman from Iowa (Mr. GANSKE) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. GANSKE. Mr. Speaker, I have taken to the well of this Chamber many times to talk about the need to enact meaningful patient protection legislation. There is a compelling need for Federal action, and I am far from alone in holding that view.

Last week, for example, Paul Elwood gave a speech at Harvard University on health care quality. Paul Elwood is not a household name, but he is considered the father of the HMO movement. Elwood told a surprised group that he did not think health care quality would improve without government-imposed

protections. Market forces, he told the group, "will never work to improve quality, nor will voluntary effort by doctors and health plans."

Elwood went on to say, and I quote, "It doesn't make any difference how powerful you are or how much you know. Patients get atrocious care and can do very little about it. I have increasingly felt we've got to shift the power to the patient. I'm mad, in part because I have learned that terrible care can happen to anyone."

Mr. Speaker, this is not the commentary of a mother whose child was injured by her HMO's refusal to authorize care. It is not the statement of a doctor who could not get requested treatment for his patient. No, Mr. Speaker, those words, suggesting that consumers need real patient protection legislation to protect them from HMO abuses, come from the father of managed care.

I am tempted to stop here and let Dr. Elwood's words speak for themselves, but I think it is important to give my colleagues an understanding of the flaws in the health care market that led Dr. Elwood to reach his conclusion. Cases involving patients who lose their limbs or even their life are not isolated examples. Mr. Speaker, they are not mere anecdotes.

In the past, I have spoken about James Adams, an infant who lost both his hands and both his feet when his mother's health plan made them drive past one emergency room after another in order to go to an authorized emergency room. Unfortunately, enroute, James suffered an arrest, and because of that arrest he lost both hands and feet because of the delay in treatment.

On Monday, May 4, USA Today ran an excellent editorial on that subject. It was entitled: "Patients Face Big Bills as Insurers Deny Emergency Claims." After citing a similar case involving a Seattle woman, USA Today made some telling observations: "Patients facing emergencies might feel they have to choose between putting their health at risk and paying a huge bill they may not be able to afford;" or, "All patients are put at risk if hospitals facing uncertainty about payment are forced to cut back on medical care."

And this is hardly an isolated problem. The Medicare Rights Center in New York reported that 10 percent of complaints for Medicare HMOs related to denials for emergency room bills. The editorial noted that about half the States have enacted prudent layperson definitions for emergency care this decade, and Congress has passed such protection for Medicare and Medicaid recipients. Nevertheless, the USA Today editorial concludes that this patchwork of laws would be much strengthened by passage of a national prudent layperson standard that applies to all Americans.

The final sentence of the editorial reads, "Patients in distress should not have to worry about getting soaked